

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace paragraph [02] with the following amended paragraph:

This application is related to ~~and claims the benefit of~~ the co-pending applications No. 09/\_\_\_\_\_, 09/921,282 entitled "MANAGEMENT OF VIRTUAL AND PHYSICAL NETWORK INVENTORIES" (Atty. Docket No. 020366-077210US); No. 09/\_\_\_\_\_, 09/921,285 entitled "PROVISIONING SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR AUTO-DISCOVERING CUSTOMER PREMISES EQUIPMENT IN ACTIVATING xDSL" (Atty. Docket No. 020366-077310US); 09/921,283 entitled "PROACTIVE REPAIR PROCESS IN THE xDSL NETWORK (WITH A VDSL FOCUS)" (Atty. Docket No. 020366-077610US); No. 09/\_\_\_\_\_, 09/921,276 entitled "FAULT MANAGEMENT IN A VDSL NETWORK" (Atty. Docket No. 020366-077510US); No. 09/\_\_\_\_\_, 09/921,277 entitled "FAULT MANAGEMENT IN A VDSL NETWORK" (Atty. Docket No. 020366-077520US); No. 09/\_\_\_\_\_, No. 09/\_\_\_\_\_, 09/921,275 entitled "PROACTIVE SERVICE REQUEST MANAGEMENT AND MEASUREMENT" (Atty. Docket No. 020366-077710US), and No. 09/\_\_\_\_\_, 09/921,274 entitled, "LINKING ORDER ENTRY PROCESS TO REALTIME NETWORK INVENTORIES AND CAPACITIES" (Atty. Docket No. 020366-077810US), all filed August 1, 2001, the disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference.

Please replace paragraph [26] with the following amended paragraph:

Network element inventory 106 may be any database capable of storing data relating to network 102. In one embodiment, the network element inventory 106 may receive data from shared network 108 and plurality of customer networks 110 directly thereby removing the need for EMS 104. Network element inventory 106 includes network discovered physical inventory, network discovered logical inventory, and planned network inventory in one embodiment. In one embodiment, network element inventory 106 is as described in co-pending U.S. Application No. 09/\_\_\_\_\_, 09/921,282 entitled "MANAGEMENT OF VIRTUAL AND PHYSICAL NETWORK INVENTORIES" (Atty. Docket No. 020366-077210US).

Please replace paragraph [87] with the following amended paragraph:

Once the soft failure is received, the soft failure may be used to isolate other alarms. In step S902, the failure is correlated and filtered. In correlating the alarm, the process interacts with the network topology data dictionary (Step S904) and the network layer definition in network element inventory 106 to correlate the alarm with other related alarms (Step S906). The network layer definition includes a logical map of the virtual network, such as assignments in video Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) protocols or Internet Protocol (IP)/ATM data protocols. Fault management system 304 uses the soft failure and the network element that generated the soft failure to determine upstream and downstream physical and virtual network elements. Thus, a physical and virtual map of a upstream and downstream network affected by the soft failure is discovered.